



Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs Education
Committee Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2006, 3:00pm, IGCS Foyer 2 West

Committee Members:

Christine Cde Baca, Education Committee Chair
Marilee Updike, Indianapolis Public Schools ESL / ESL Task Force
Thomas Upton, Indiana University-Purdue University ESL
Ellen Krulewitch, Elkhart Community Schools ENL
Maria Dalhoumi, School City of East Chicago ESL
Frances Vega, ICHLA Vice-Chair / Ivy Tech Hispanic Outreach

ICHLA Staff Members:

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director
Laura Barrett, Education Researcher

I. Welcome, Introductions

Chair Cde Baca welcomed newly appointed Committee members and asked those present to give brief introductions.

Chair Cde Baca introduced herself as the Chair for the Education Committee and as the Deputy Director of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission.

Director Mendoza is the Executive Director of the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs. She thanked the newly appointed Committee members for their interest and participation with the ICHLA's Education Committee.

Laura Barrett introduced herself as Commission staff. She researches Education and Civil Rights/Housing issues. She will be the contact liaison for the Education Committee.

Marilee Updike has been working with Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) as an ENL Program Coordinator since 1992 and has also taught ESL since 1979, when there was little training and no certification. Marilee Updike discussed the current language barriers, gang activities, the new culture wave and how there are a lot of kids with a lot of issues.

Thomas Upton introduced himself as a Professor in the English Department within the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) School of Education. He works primarily with TESOL students, the Second Language Acquisition Program and the ESL/ENL license training. Thomas Upton was pleased to announce that there are currently 40 students enrolled in IUPUI's ESL/ENL license training program. He explained that this number is very high for both new and current teachers studying ESL/ENL.

Ellen Krulewitch has been an ENL Family Liaison for Elkhart Community Schools for the past 3 ½ years. She explained that the school system has seen about a 270% increase in ENL/ESL students within the last 10 years. Ellen Krulewitch discussed the following Hispanic/Latino concerns: Gang issues, student placement, free/reduced lunch program, undocumented student issues, Medicaid waivers for undocumented students, immunization issues and etc. The Elkhart Community Schools have one official translator for materials/documents and several ENL staff members who are bilingual.

II. Explanation of Hispanic/Latino Commission

Director Mendoza explained the Hispanic/Latino Commission and distributed Commission brochures. The Commission is a non-partisan state agency that promotes cooperation and understanding, identifies and reviews issues affecting the Hispanic/Latino community and provides recommendations to the Governor and Legislative Council. The Commission is made up of 4 members from the Indiana General Assembly, 7 State Agency members, 4 Lay members appointed by the President Pro Tempore, 4 Lay members appointed by the Speaker of the House and 1 lay member appointed by the Governor.

Director Mendoza discussed the 2004-2005 Report of Findings and Recommendations that was recently completed by the Commission and submitted to both the Governor and Legislature. She explained that the Commission used research and findings from the committee meetings and public forums to complete the annual report. Director Mendoza informed the Committee that the year 2006 is the first year for appointed Committee members. The Commission is composed of 8 different Committees: Health Committee, Business/Economic Development Committee, Education Committee, Research Committee, Media Committee, Civil Rights & Housing Committee, Driver's License/Immigration Committee and the Special Tax Issues Committee. The Committee research from 2004-2005 relied heavily on community input from around the state, identifying specific issues regarding Hispanic/Latinos.

Director Mendoza encouraged the Education Committee members to assist in addressing Hispanic/Latino education issues.

III. Explanation of Education Committee & Member Responsibilities

Chair Cde Baca reviewed the Education Committee's Strategic Plan for 2006-2008. The Committee will research identified topics, make recommendations, report findings, monitor the national trends and issues that have the potential to affect the Hispanic/Latino population of Indiana. The Education Committee will partner with other state agencies or organizations to study issues relevant to the Hispanic/Latino communities. The Education Committee will also complete reports and provide feedback to the Commission. The Committee will partner with the ESL/LEP Department of IUPUI and the Department of Education to assess the current issues surrounding implementation of ESL/LEP classes, research and assess current ESL/LEP endorsement standards and identify effective bilingual endorsements, make recommendations to state agencies who currently offer an ESL/LEP program or who are considering the implementation of an ESL/LEP program and educate employers, state agencies, various industries or organizations and the community on the impacts and cost savings of endorsing effective bilingual program standards and endorsements.

Chair Cde Baca informed the Committee members that several different Education Committee meetings were held throughout the State in 2005. Chair Cde Baca asked that the Education Committee meet at least 4 times before the end of the year 2006.

IV. Review of Action Steps & Input

Director Mendoza mentioned a Development Standards Study completed by the State of California. Director Mendoza asked for all Committee members to provide input on similar studies/models used in the State of Indiana for LEP, ENL and ESL students. Director Mendoza plans to email all Committee members the standards model from California. Logansport Community Schools used the California study to establish their own district ENL program in 1997-1998 called "English as a New Language (ENL) Program Review." This program is one example of a community's standards. Committee members were encouraged to share/research other effective models used throughout the state.

Thomas Upton asked that the Strategic Plan include a comparison of a wide variety of models that offer ESL/LEP/ENL classes in addition to those provided by agencies and communities. Many school districts are approaching these issues in different ways.

Director Mendoza agreed with his suggestion and reassured the Committee that the Commission is always thinking statewide.

Mary Dalhoumi is the ESL Director for East Chicago Public Schools, where she has worked for the past 28 years. She coordinates various adult education programs and is involved in grant writing.

Director Mendoza readdressed the need to look for different program models.

Marilee Updike asked if the Education Committee is looking for teacher training models.

Director Mendoza agreed that teacher training models are needed as well as program structures for students.

Marilee Updike agreed that Indiana has borrowed similar program structures from California. She asked if the California study included CLAD (Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development) requirements.

Director Mendoza plans to examine the California study and will inform the Committee of its requirements.

Director Mendoza said that the Commission is looking to get more representation from other communities.

Maria Dalhoumi was pleased to announce that East Chicago and Hammond now provide ESL endorsements for teachers through a partnership with Indiana University-Bloomington and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. This minimizes the classroom time for teachers and condenses the necessary coursework needed to earn a TESOL endorsement. This program allows teachers the ability to earn 9 credit hours during spring/summer months; these hours can transfer to another IU program. Teachers can earn a free endorsement on their teaching license through this program. Maria Dalhoumi recommended this program as a good model to be used across the state.

Director Mendoza asked the Education Committee to research more information on similar programs.

Marilee Updike knew of someone who wrote a grant that allowed for those hard-pressed for a certificate to pursue one.

Ellen Krulewitch said that the Department of Education from Indiana University-South Bend does not have the endorsement/transition to teaching available at their site.

Chair Cde Baca asked the Education Committee to identify state agencies that have programs.

Director Mendoza discussed the need for additional LEP funding.

Marilee Updike said that the Indiana LEP funding allocation has remained the same since 1999.

Ellen Krulewitch explained how LEP funding originally funded \$750/student and has since decreased to \$21/\$22 per student. She said, "The schools are losing money each year."

Chair Cde Baca asked all Committee members to email what they feel is an appropriate funding allocation for their school systems.

Marilee Updike said that the schools are happy to have any sort of funding, as they were afraid that the \$21/\$22 might disappear; although, it doesn't buy much.

Director Mendoza explained that the Commission will continue to push for additional funding during each budget session. She asked the Committee to determine how much funding would be sufficient for each LEP student. Director Mendoza said that the Department of Education has not given the Education Committee an exact number, as the Committee is looking to other states for appropriate allocation models.

Marilee Updike discussed a study completed by the Indiana Urban School Association (IUSA). Dick Smith studied several school districts to determine how much Indiana spends on state allocation. The districts were spending a higher dollar figure in the late 1990's, which averaged out to be \$2,000-\$2,500 extra.

Ellen Krulewitch asked if this study included Title III funds.

Director Mendoza stressed the importance of highlighting these issues and would like for them to be included in the September Committee report.

Marilee Updike assured the Committee that Title III funds were used in the IUSA study. She explained how Title III was wonderful, however, the state funding formula was then tweaked to allow additional funding. The schools are losing a lot of personnel due to the declining number, although the money continues to follow the child.

Marilee Updike suggested someone should focus on pre-school and pre-k.

Chair Cde Baca said that the early childhood piece is very important, as it is the starting point. She informed the Committee members that this issue was not addressed last year.

Marilee Updike explained how ISTEP counts kindergarten as a whole year, although it is usually 2 ½ hours/day. She felt that those students who cannot speak English and are in kindergarten are doing pretty well, considering their language barrier. She asked if anyone would discuss bilingual education.

Maria Dalhoumi said that the East Chicago Schools has invested a bilingual program over time. She explained that the students learn different verb forms in each grade level. By the time the students graduate high school, they have usually earned at least 2 hours of college credit. Their bilingual program is a “maintenance and learning program,” as it helps with self-esteem. Maria Dalhoumi is not sure of the expenses to start a similar program.

Chair Cde Baca spoke about a bilingual district in Colorado. She plans to share this information at the next Committee meeting.

Frances Vega introduced herself as a Director of Hispanic Outreach for Ivy Tech and as the Vice-Chair for the Commission. She spoke about a situation where bilingual programs were taken out of the schools and children were sent back to their country of origin. Frances Vega is looking into determining how bilingual education is involved with the postsecondary schools. She said that eventually, everyone will have to address the issues of the dropout rate. Frances Vega mentioned the National Society of Hispanic MBA's (NSHMBA) as a good organization that recruits kids in schools. Frances Vega also discussed language assessments in schools and their effectiveness.

Ellen Krulewitch said that the language assessment test is called “LAS Links”

Frances Vega asked what grades K-12 are using as a language assessment instrument.

Marilee Updike explained how language assessment is a federal mandate. Language Assessment is enforced through the No Child Left Behind Act.

Maria Dalhoumi discussed the federal Office of Civil Rights and how they were mandated to use an English proficiency test. This test used to be called “Lost Links,” before it became standardized.

Marilee Updike said that before the “LAS Links” test was mandated, there was very poor communication on how to identify children through diocese schools unlike those from public schools.

Frances Vega mentioned that she had volunteered at the diocese school testing and noticed how several students in the room should not have been there. Some of these students were tested simply because the language was spoken at home.

Marilee Updike assured the Committee that schools are not required to contact parents prior to assessment testing.

Ellen Krulewitch explained that every enrolled student must be given a home language survey. The parents mark the languages spoken. If the child had any exposure to a specific language, then the child is tested as an LEP student. The child might not need services, but is required to be tested annually to measure their growth.

Chair Cde Baca asked the Committee members if there were any specific issues needed to be addressed as a Committee.

Frances Vega expressed her #1 concern as being the dropout rate. She explained NSHMBA's Project Stepping Stone organized by NSHMBA President Steve Ramos. This statewide project structures students into the business environment, while business professionals mentor these students. Frances Vega said that it is amazing how many students have not stepped foot on a college campus.

Chair Cde Baca mentioned a school in Denver, CO where local business leaders and CEO's offer internships for high school students. These students can start as early as 9th grade; the schools have many partnerships with local businesses. Chair Cde Baca plans to bring more detailed information on this program to the next Committee meeting.

Frances Vega said that a program deadline extension had to be made due to the lack of seats filled.

Marilee Updike suggested that these programs look at those kids that are marginal. She said that this program should not look at just the "A" students.

Frances Vega agreed that this issue needs to be addressed.

V. Other Issues

Chair Cde Baca mentioned an article in TIME Magazine that discussed the national dropout rate; Shelbyville, Indiana was featured in the article.

Frances Vega gave a personal reference to her success as a Latina. She said that she was supposed to fail. Frances Vega spoke about a high school guidance counselor that discouraged her from attending a large university/college simply because she was Hispanic/Latino. She said that many students were probably hurt by this counselor. She was encouraged by a different counselor and achieved educational success by earning a master's degree. She also informed the Committee about a statewide counselor's meeting. She said that this Committee should contact and educate those counselors that attend the workshops. Those are the two main issues that Frances Vega would like to address, as she is a successful product of higher education and Hispanics/Latinos.

Marilee Updike commented on cultural competence; it is the law.

Ellen Krulewitch explained the transition difficulties from ISTAR to ISTEP. She said, "Kids are simply thrown into them." Kids might fail intentionally because maintaining a job is sometimes a higher priority than waiting to receive a higher education. Ellen Krulewitch would like to see this cycle and its thought process

broken. The parents must understand that attendance and asking for help is very important.

Marilee Updike said, "Kids come to us poorly prepared."

Frances Vega discussed the large gang issue. She said that the majority of those Hispanics in California are gang members.

Ellen Krulewitch announced that Elkhart County has already experienced two gang-related murders and one attempted murder within the past few months between the Surs and the Norteños.

Frances Vega spoke about the gang called "Mara Salvatrucha" from El Salvador. She said that this gang has a female leader called "La Diabla," who rips out the hearts of her victims. Frances Vega would like to see more gang prevention education.

Marilee gave reference to the Safe Streets Task Force.

Frances Vega said that the Safe Streets Task Force is wonderful.

Frances Vega explained how easily it is for Hispanic/Latino kids to become involved in gang activities. She said that the child has to "become the parent" when they are brought to the United States. The immigrant parents often rely heavily on their children to translate/interpret. She said, "By the time these children are teenagers, they are telling their parents what to do."

Chair Cde Baca acknowledged this issue as another area of Committee concern.

Marilee Updike said that some of the gang members are the best and brightest kids.

Ellen Krulewitch mentioned the Anti-Gang Coalition in Elkhart, IN. This Coalition is trying to get the business community to recognize the economic impact of the gangs and kids. She said that the denial factor is incredible. Gang members are now wearing rosaries and tattoos as gang symbols instead of bandanas, etc. clothing. These symbols are not as easily recognized.

Chair Cde Baca said that all of these issues are very important to the Education Committee.

Ellen Krulewitch discussed a project that was completed to determine the best programs for teaching LEP students.

VI. Assignments

Chair Cde Baca asked Thomas Upton to please provide the Committee with information on training and retention. She informed the Committee members that

Laura Barrett will send the completed meeting minutes via email. She asked all Committee members to read through the minutes and return to the next Committee meeting with additional information from the issues discussed. Chair Cde Baca asked for date/time suggestions for the next Education Committee meeting.

Christine confirmed Thursday, June 1, 2006 from 3:00pm-4:30pm as the next Education Committee meeting. She asked all members to help address the issues discussed.

VII. Adjournment

Chair Cde Baca adjourned the ICHLA Education Committee meeting at approximately 4:30pm.